

In the Claims

Please amend page 12, line 1 as follows:

Claims-What is claimed is:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, including the original set of claims Published and the amended sheets attached to the IPER of claims in the application. These amendments reflect the amended claims based on the IPER.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Original) A method for producing hyperpolarized ^{129}Xe comprising
 - a) preparing a mixture of xenon, at least one solvent or a mixture of solvents which has good glass-forming properties and/or lipophilic properties and a free radical
 - b) hyperpolarizing said mixture according to the DNP method to obtain hyperpolarized ^{129}Xe and
 - c) optionally separating said xenon from the other components of the mixture.
2. (Original) A method according to claim 1, the at least one solvent or mixture of solvents is selected from the group consisting of straight chain or branched C₆-C₁₂-alkanes, C₅-C₁₂-cycloalkanes, fatty alcohols, fatty esters, substituted benzene derivatives, mono- or polyfluorinated solvents, single chained alcohols and glycols.
3. (Currently amended) A method according to ~~claims 1 to 2~~ claim 1, wherein the mixture in step a) is prepared from liquid xenon.
4. (Currently amended) A method according to ~~claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, wherein the mixture in step a) is prepared by condensing xenon gas on the top of the at least one solvent or mixture of solvents and the free radical, warming the components until xenon and the at least one solvent or mixture of solvents are in a liquid state and mixing the components until a homogeneous mixture is obtained.

5. (Currently amended) A method according to ~~claims 1 to 4~~ claim 1, wherein in step b) ^{129}Xe is directly hyperpolarized.
6. (Currently amended) A method according to ~~claims 1 to 5~~ claim 1, wherein in step b) the NMR active nuclei of the at least one solvent or mixture of solvents are hyperpolarized and this polarization is subsequently transferred to ^{129}Xe by a cross-polarization sequence.
7. (Currently amended) A method according to ~~claims 1 to 6~~ claim 1, wherein xenon enriched with ^{129}Xe is used.
8. (Currently amended) A method according to ~~claims 1 to 7~~ claim 1, wherein in step c) xenon is separated from the other components of the mixture by warming the mixture until xenon is in the gas state and collecting said xenon in a suitable container.
9. (Original) A method for the production of a contrast agent comprising
 - a) preparing a mixture of xenon, at least one solvent or a mixture of solvents which has good glass-forming properties and/or lipophilic properties and a free radical
 - b) hyperpolarizing said mixture according to the DNP method to obtain hyperpolarized ^{129}Xe
 - c) separating said xenon from the other components of the mixture, and
 - d) optionally condensing the separated xenon again.
10. (Currently amended) Use of DNP - hyperpolarized ^{129}Xe produced according to the method of claim 1 ~~to 8~~ for the manufacture of a contrast agent for the use in magnetic resonance imaging of the human or non-human animal body, preferably of the lungs of the human or non-human animal body.